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ABSTRACT

The perceptions of 226 (of 262 contacted) industrial trainers in Tennessee were analyzed to identify the competencies needed by human resource specialists and to determine the competencies that need further development. Respondents were asked to provide various demographic data (including job title, formal education, military experience, amount of experience as a trainer, preparatory training possessed) and to rate the importance of 78 tasks typically performed by industrial trainers. More than 50 percent of the respondents reported performing 63 of the 78 training tasks studied. More than 50 percent rated the need for additional training as important for 69 of the 78 tasks. The degree to which different training tasks were performed varied by geographic area of the state, as well as by respondents' educational background (high school or associate degrees versus higher levels of educational attainment), military experience, and amount of time spent as a trainer. Respondents from companies where they were the only training specialist reported less need for additional training for three administrative tasks than did those from companies employing two to five specialists, and those with less experience reported a greater need for additional training. (MN)

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SUMMARY REPORT

TRAINING COMPETENCIES OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT SPECIALISTS IN TENNESSEE

BY
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EMPHASIZING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH IN HUMAN RESOURCES

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FOREWORD

It is a pleasure to introduce the first publication from the newly formed Office for Human Resources Development. The Department of Technological and Adult Education is committed to conducting, publishing, and disseminating research that will improve the economic development of Tennessee. The Office will coordinate the Department's efforts in research, training, and service to enhance the State's ability to be competitive in a high-technology based economy. In order for the State to be competitive, we must increase our productivity and the quality of our products and services. Our investment in human capital will assist in accomplishing these goals.

This report summarizes information on needed training competencies. The perceptions of trainers in Tennessee were analyzed to determine these competencies. Information in this report is organized to help decision makers both in industry and education as they consider such concerns as collaboration, selection and evaluation of trainers, and the training and retraining of workers. It is appropriate that the first publication of the Office reports the findings on this timely issue. This research project, funded by the Tennessee Valley Authority, was a survey of industrial trainers in the State. A sampling of the membership of the American Society of Training and Development (ASTD) generously shared their opinions of the most needed competencies of industrial trainers. The Director of the project, Dr. Walter Cameron, used one of the most effective techniques to capture data for analysis. The card sort method gave trainers an effective tool that allowed them to select their most important duties and prioritize. In addition to this report, these data were used to plan a workshop, "Improving Your Effectiveness as a Professional Trainer" that will be offered in the near future.

Ken Cox provided technical assistance for this publication in the form of data base programming, cover design and camera ready copy production. Salena Davidson assisted with mailings and typing, and Chelyncia Brewer compiled and entered the data for analysis. Their assistance and suggestions for improvement are greatly appreciated.

It is with great pride that this publication is provided for your use and benefit. It is the first of many that the Office for Human Resource Development has planned.

Gerald Cheek, Head
Department of Technological and Adult Education

SUMMARY REPORT

TRAINING COMPETENCIES OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT SPECIALISTS IN TENNESSEE

During 1987 a developmental project was undertaken through a joint effort of the University of Tennessee, Department of Technological and Adult Education and the Tennessee Valley Authority. The primary purpose of the project was to identify the training competencies needed by human resource specialists and to determine the competencies that needed further professional development. A secondary purpose was to use this information to assess the adequacy of the present undergraduate and graduate programs for training personnel and to determine the feasibility of developing a professional development institute for upgrading the training competencies of specialists.

In attaining the purpose of the project the following questions were asked:

1. What are the demographic profiles of human resource development specialists who are members of the American Society of Training and Development (ASTD) in Tennessee. Demographics factors assessed were:
   a. Job titles
   b. Formal education
   c. Military experience
   d. Number of specialists with which training specialist works
   e. Amount of experience as specialist
   f. Type of education/training received in preparing for job
2. What are the training tasks that are performed by at least fifty percent of human resource development specialists?
3. What are the training tasks which are perceived by specialists as being the most important with respect to their need for additional training?
4. Does whether a task is performed differ among specialists on the basis of ASTD chapter of membership, education, military experience, number of specialists, or amount of experience?
5. Is the importance of need for additional training perceived differently by specialists on the basis of ASTD chapter of membership, education, military experience, number of specialists or amount of experience?

Population

The population selected for the study was the members of the American Society of Training and Development (ASTD) located in the five ASTD chapters in Tennessee. The five chapters were:

1. East Tennessee - located in Tri-Cities
2. Greater Chattanooga Area - located in Chattanooga
3. Middle Tennessee - located in Nashville
4. Mid-South - located in Memphis
5. Smoky Mountain - located in Knoxville

The population of the study was the 833 members in the five Tennessee chapters during 1987. From the population, a stratified random sample was selected to insure a confidence level of 95 percent. The sample size was 262.

The breakdown of members per chapter for the total population, the sample, the respondents and the non-respondents is presented in Table 1. Responses were received from 226 individuals. Of the 226 responses, 5 individuals reported they did not have time to complete the survey, 2 stated they would complete it only if paid a fee and 49 reported they no longer performed training activities in their present job. Eleven survey packages were returned as undeliverable due to addressee unknown or addressee moved with no forwarding address. A total 159 surveys were returned; 154 contained useable information. Five surveys were partially completed by individuals who were students and who were not presently working in training. These five forms were not used.

Several attempts were made to follow-up all of the 36 non-respondents by mail and/or telephone. When contacted five non-respondents reported they did not receive the survey package. Ten non-respondents reported they were not involved in training activities. Attempts by telephone were not successful in contacting the remaining 21 non-respondents nor was any reply received from a second mail follow-up.

TABLE 1
POPULATION, SAMPLE, RESPONDENTS AND NON-RESPONDENTS BY CHAPTER

ASTD Chapter	1987 Membership	Sample	Respondents	Non-Respondents
East Tennessee	62	21	19	2
Greater Chattanooga Area	89	29	25	4
Middle Tennessee	307	97	81	16
Mid-South	213	68	58	10
Smoky Mountain	162	47	43	4
Total	833	262	226	36

Procedures

The first step in developing an instrument for collecting information from the training specialists was identifying the tasks likely to be performed. The literature was reviewed to develop a preliminary list of tasks. Next, six employed trainers reviewed the list. This group of trainers ranged in experience from less than one year to greater than ten years. This group critiqued the original list and made several changes and additions to the list. A total of 78 tasks which met their approval were identified.

Instead of creating the usual survey form to collect information about the 78 tasks, it was decided that a task card sort would be used. Each task was printed on a separate 2 1/4" by 4" card. Decks of yellow cards were printed for the use of individuals sampled to sort into "yes" and "no" piles. If they performed the tasks in their jobs, they inserted the yellow cards imprinted with task in the "yes" envelope. If they did not perform the tasks they placed them in the "no" envelope.

Decks of blue cards were imprinted with tasks and were used to obtain information on the importance of additional training for performing each task. Individuals were asked to respond by reading the tasks imprinted on the blue card and to place the card in:

1. A "0" envelope if they believed additional training would be of no importance.
2. A "1" envelope if they believed additional training would be of little importance.
3. A "2" envelope if they believed additional training would be of some importance.
4. A "3" envelope if they believed additional training would be important.
5. A "4" envelope if they believed additional training would be highly important.
6. A "5" envelope if they believed additional training would be extremely important.

A cover letter, instructions, one deck of yellow cards, one deck of blue cards, a demographic information sheet, a pre-stamped, pre-addressed return envelope and were mailed to each individual in the sample of 262.

Analyses

The demographic information sheets of respondents were tallied to develop the demographic profiles. Demographic factors assessed were: job titles, formal education, military experience, number of specialists in respondent's company or agency, amount of experience as trainer and type of preparatory training possessed. This information was used to answer question one: "What are the demographic profiles of human resource development specialists who are members of ASTD in Tennessee?"

When the sorted task cards were returned, a data sheet was used to record the responses to organize the data for analysis. The results from the yellow cards were used to answer the question: "What are the training tasks that are performed by at least fifty percent of human resource development specialists?"

If at least fifty percent of the respondents reported performing the task, it was perceived as being a critical task for training.

With the blue task cards respondents were asked to rate their perceived importance of additional training needed for each of the 78 tasks which they performed on their job. This information was used to answer the question: "What are the training tasks which are perceived by specialists as being the most important with respect to need for additional training?"

For analysis purposes the percentage of responses were grouped into three categories:

1. Percentage of respondents which rated training need for each task as of no importance or little importance

2. Percentage of respondents which rated the training need for each task as of some importance or as important

3. Percentage of respondents which rated the training need for each task as highly important or extremely important

If fifty percent of the respondents gave ratings which fell into the categories of two and three, the task was considered as being one in which additional training was needed. The results are reported under the six competency areas of administrative, needs assessment, instructional techniques, materials development, evaluation and personal/professional development.

An analysis using chi square was completed to answer the fourth research question of this study: "Does whether a task is performed differ among specialists on the basis of chapter of membership, education, military experience, number of specialists or amount of experience?" The level of significance was set at the .05 level.

A one-way analysis of variance was completed to answer the fifth research question of this study. "Is the importance of need for additional training perceived differently by specialists on the basis of ASTD chapter of membership, education, military experience, number of specialists, or amount of experience?" The level of significance was set at the .05 level.

Summary of Findings

The following major findings were derived from the study.

1. With respect to trainer characteristics:

   a. **Job titles**-Many respondents indicated they had more than one title. The most frequent titles used in descending order were manager, consultant, instructor, and instructional materials developer.

   b. **Level of education**-Nine percent of the respondents had completed high school. Twelve percent had completed an associate degree. Bachelor degrees had been received by 36 percent of the respondents. Thirty percent of the respondents had complete master degrees and thirteen percent had completed doctoral degrees.

   c. **Military experience**-Thirty-two percent of the respondents reported they had completed military training. The average number of months of military training completed was 14.6 months.

   d. **Number of specialists**-Fifteen percent of the respondents indicated they were the only specialist in their company. Thirty-six percent stated they worked where there were 2 to 5 specialists. Seven percent of the respondents stated 6 to 10 specialists were employed at their company.

   e. **Level of experience**-Nine percent of the respondents had one year or less than one year of experience in training. Individuals with greater than one but less than five years of training experience constituted twenty-two percent of the respondents. Thirty-one percent of the respondents had five to ten years of training experience and thirty-eight percent had more than ten years of training experience.

   f. **Type of education and training**-Trainers reported that they received many different types of preparation to help them become trainers. One hundred thirty-six reported they learned their job by doing it. Workshops were reported as one of the ways one hundred thirty respondents prepared for their job. One hundred twenty-six learned their position duties through on-the-job training. Ninety-nine learned their job through formal training programs. Sixty-six reported they had learned the duties of their job through self-study. Fifteen reported they had learned their job through other means such as seminars, conferences, and in-house special programs.

2. More than fifty percent of the respondents reported performing sixty-three of the seventy-eight training tasks. (See Table 2)

3. More than fifty percent of the respondents rated the need for additional training as important for sixty-nine of the seventy-eight training tasks (See Table 2).

4. Respondents from the Greater Chattanooga Area and Smoky Mountain chapters reported performing six tasks to a lesser extent than those from the Middle Tennessee, Mid-South or East Tennessee chapters.

5. Respondents with high school or associate degree levels of educational preparation were less likely to perform four tasks than those with higher levels of educational attainment.

6. Respondents who had military experience reported performing six tasks to a greater extent than those who had no military experience.

7. Nine tasks were identified as being performed by a greater percentage of respondents employed by companies with only one training specialist.

8. Twenty-one tasks were identified as being performed to a lesser extent by those with one year or less of training experience than those who had more experience.

9. With respect to need for additional training respondents did not differ significantly by chapter or educational attainment.

10. Respondents with military experience reported a greater need for additional training on three administrative tasks than did those without military training.

11. Respondents from companies where they were the only training specialist reported less need for additional training for three administrative tasks than those from companies employing two to five specialists.

12. Respondents with less experience reported greater need for additional training than those with more training experience for nine tasks.

TABLE 2
PERCENTAGE WHO PERFORM TASKS AND PERCENTAGE WHO PERCEIVED NEED FOR ADDITIONAL TRAINING

Tasks	Percent Performing	Percent who Need Training
Administrative		
Conduct meetings	95	50
Plan and manage training objectives	88	78
Present recommendations to senior management	86	75
Write training program proposals	81	78
Contract with outside vendors for training programs, equipment,and supplies	77	60
Develop cooperation between departments, agencies, units, etc.	77	70
Prepare reports and papers on training and development activities	76	69

Tasks	Percent Performing	Percent who Need Training
Develop training policies and goals	75	74
Train training staff	69	77
Organize research to evaluate and support training and development activities	69	84
Supervise training material production	69	65
Prepare training program costs	67	73
Arrange for participation in external training and development programs	67	NA
Counsel individuals on career development	67	79
Acquire and set up training facilities	66	53
Prepare training forecasts	63	83
Establish and maintain a library of print and non print training resources and career development information	63	52
Report information on training and development costs and benefits	63	75
Maintain records of participation in training	63	NA
Evaluate proposals from outside consultants	58	62
Supervise training staff	56	72
Set objectives for departmental staff	54	72
Recruit and interview training staff	50	64
Supervise consultants on site	NA	54
Develop guidelines for using outside consultants	NA	62
Needs Assessment		
Determine content of training programs	86	75
Develop long-range and short-range training plans	78	82
Develop and implement training needs assessment techniques (formal and informal)	75	87
Analyze performance problems	70	89
Organize and conduct job analysis	NA	83

Tasks	Percent Performing	Percent who Need Training
Instructional Techniques		
Promote learning through group discussions and brainstorming	90	62
Present instruction with chalkboard, overhead projector, and/or flip chart	90	NA
Promote learning through oral questioning techniques	89	68
Promote learning through demonstration	88	61
Present instruction with filmstrips, slide tape presentations, films, or videotapes	86	53
Introduce a lesson	82	NA
Promote learning through use of simulation	82	69
Summarize a lesson	80	NA
Present instruction through illustrated lectures	80	53
Apply the principles of adult learning in all instruction	80	74
Present instruction with self-teaching techniques such as microcomputer and interactive video equipment	NA	77
Facilitate learning through use of wish bone problem solving	NA	65
Materials Development		
Select instructional material and media to meet the needs of trainees	88	68
Develop training program objectives	86	69
Select instructional methods to meet needs of trainees and content	86	73
Revise materials based on evaluation feedback	81	71
Evaluate and select commercial training materials	81	62
Apply adult learning theory and instructional principles in developing program content and material	78	75
Develop training materials (workbooks, exercises, etc.)	78	65
Develop overhead transparencies	76	NA
Prepare and adapt lesson plans	75	61

Tasks	Percent Performing	Percent who Need Training
Develop assessment tools (checklists, performance exercises, etc.)	75	84
Develop instructional objectives to include performance, standards and conditions	70	75
Develop lesson planning guide	68	64
Prepare scripts for films, videotapes, etc.	NA	63
Develop programmed learning or computer managed instructional materials	NA	72
Develop training plans for individual trainees	NA	64
Establish and implement a filing and retrieval system for instructional materials	NA	51
Develop multi-choice, open-ended, and matching tests	NA	54
Evaluation		
Design and implement procedures for program evaluation	79	81
Design evaluation instruments and procedures	66	79
Design and implement procedures for instructor evaluation	65	80
Design and implement procedures for instructional material evaluation	65	79
Write evaluation reports	65	71
Design and implement plan for providing Evaluation feedback to participants	61	78
Design and implement procedures for training plan evaluation	58	79
Use statistical strategies to analyze and summarize evaluation data	NA	78
Personal/Professional Development		
Promote the training and development to the organization and individuals	92	75
Participate in internal and external professional development activities	87	53
Maintain an effective interface with the organizational environment	87	76

Tasks	Percent Performing	Percent who Need Training
Counsel managers and supervisors on training and development issues	76	73
Interpret and use training research results	64	69
Prepare and disseminate internal and external training and development program announcements	60	59
Participate in research activities	57	67
Participate in development and evaluation of apprenticeship programs	NA	60

* NA - not applicable - less than 50 percent

Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn from the findings of the study:

1. A majority of the tasks verified by a panel of trainers is performed by training specialists in Tennessee.

2. Training specialists in Tennessee express a great need for additional training to increase their training competence.

3. Characteristics such as age, level of education, military experience, training experience, location in state, or number of training specialists at a work place has limited impact on whether a training specialist performs a task.

4. Characteristics such as age, level of education, military experience, training experience, location in state, or number of training specialists at a work place has limited impact on the training specialist's need for additional training.